(c) if not, whether Government will consider it shortly to improve it keeping in view the importance of the airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has plans to construct a new airconditioned terminal building at a cost of Rs. 24.58 crores with modern amenities to cater to 500 passengers at a time and to extend runway from 6000' to 7500' suitable for AB-320 class of aircraft without load penalty at a cost of Rs. 20 crores.

Renaming of Airports

†3225. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state the details of the airports in the country, the names of which have been changed during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): Following airports have been renamed as per the details given below:—

(a) Patna Airport as Jaya Prakash Narayan airport on 22-12-1996;

(b) Udaipur Airport as Maharana Pratap airport on 28-8-1997;

(c) Bhubaneswar Airport as Biju Patnaik airport on 17-04-1998;

(d) Guwahati airport as Lokapriya Gopinath Bordolai airport on 23-08-1998;

(e) Ahmedabad airport as Sardar Vallabbhai Patel International airport on 07-12-1998;

(f) Mumbai Airport as Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport on 31-03-1999;

(g) At Hyderabad Airport, on 17-06-1999, the old Terminal Building was named as N.T. Rama Rao Terminal and the new Terminal Building commissioned in March, 1997 as Rajiv Gandhi Terminal and

(h) Government approved on 16-03-2000 the renaming of Ranchi Airport as Birsa Munda airport.

Performance of Cochin Airport

3226. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether Government are aware that the new Cochin Airport is running at a loss due to the non- utilisation of the capacity;

(b) whether Government have received any request to upgrade the airport to International airport which attracts good air traffic; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to declare Cochin as an International Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) The Government has declared Cochin Airport at Nedumbassery as international airport.

Holding of Hijacked Plane at Amritsar Airport

3227. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleaed to State:

(a) whether Government are aware about the statement of former Director General of Punjab, K.P.S. Gill, that the hijacked IC-814 should have been disabled at Amritsar Airport and prevented from leaving Indian territory, as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 13th March, 2000; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) When the aircraft landed at Amritsar, concrete and specific information in respect of the numbers, nationality, weaponry, professionalism and commitment of the hijackers was scanty and speculative. On the other hand, messages being received from the hijacked aircraft were tense and demanding. Precipitate action, in the absence of even basic information was judged as being fraught with unacceptable levels of risk.

Operation of 50 Seater Aircraft in Gujarat

3228. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to State:

(a) whether Government have considered the viability of operating of 50 seater aircraft by Indian Airlines or other private airlines from some airports in Gujarat;

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.